

Famous Illustrated **MORAL STORIES**



MAPLE KIDS

Famous

Illustrated Tales of Moral Stories



Maple Press

Published by



Email: info@maplepress.co.in

Website: www.maplepress.co.in

Edition: 2015

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Printed by Artxel, Noida

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Best Friends Forever

Once upon a time, there lived a king. He was very fond of his royal elephant. The king provided his elephant with the best food and a large tent to live in. The elephant was happy and content.

A dog lived in the same kingdom. All day it would roam in the streets in search of food but rarely got anything to eat. It was weak and its bones used to show through its skin.

One day the dog was looking for food around the elephant's tent. When it peaked in the tent it was amazed to find all the food that the king had arranged for the elephant. Tempted it got inside the tent when the mahaout was not looking and began eating the food.

From that day on, the dog began to live with the elephant and feed on the food that the elephant did not eat. The elephant too did not seem to mind. In fact he had found a friend in the dog. With time their friendship grew. Together they began to live happily in the tent.

The dog's health improved and he began to look very cute.



One day a man came to visit the mahaout. He liked the dog very much and asked the mahaout if he could have the dog. Since the dog was of no use to him or the king, the mahaout agreed and the man took the dog with him.

The elephant was very sad to have his friend taken away from him. He began to

miss the dog very much. He stopped eating and fell sick. The best animal doctors were called to look at the elephant but they failed to make him better. Then one day the mahaout remembered the dog. He realized he had done a mistake. He went to the king and told him everything about the dog. At once, a messenger was asked to announce in the city for anyone who had the dog.

“Anyone who has the dog which lived in the royal elephant’s tent must return the dog to the king immediately. He shall be paid by the king for it,” the messenger announced while beating his drum.

The man who had taken the dog did not lose any time in returning the dog. The elephant gained its health again, when he got his friend back and they spent the rest of their lives in each other’s company.

Moral: *To lose a friend is the greatest of all loses.*

The Drummer's Son

Once upon a time in a small village lived a drummer with his wife and his son. The drummer was very skilled. He would often take his son with him to all the wedding, festivals and fairs where he played his drums. Slowly, his son also learned to play the drums and began to play with his father.

One day, a traveler from a nearby city liked their drumming and advised them to go to the annual fair that was taking place in his city. The drummer and his son set off for the city the next day. It was noon when they reached the fair.

It was a large fair and people from near and far visited it. The drummer and his son took their stand in the heart of the fair and began to play. Soon some people gathered around them. Then more people came to listen to their drumming. They began to clap with their drumming. Some of them even danced to the music.

Money began to pour on the sheet spread in front of them. When the day ended, the drummer and his son were very happy with the amount of money they had earned that day. They counted the coins and set off for home. The drummer couldn't wait to share the news with his wife.



On the way, they had to cross a forest. It was getting dark. The drummer knew that the forest was home of some deadly robbers. He warned his son to be quiet while they crossed the forest. But his son was very confident after the day's success. "We will go through the forest while playing our drums," his son said.

“This will scare the robbers away.”

He continued to play his drums loudly while they walked through the forest. His father kept on asking him to stop but the son did not listen to him.

The robbers in the forest heard the sound of the drums. They wondered how many people were crossing the forest. They hid behind trees and watched the drummer and his son. When they found out that they could easily attack the two men, they did not wait anymore.

The poor drummer and his son were robbed of all the money. They had to go back home empty handed.

Moral: Always act as per the situation.



The Clever Crow

It was a hot summer afternoon. Last night's storm had blown the crow's nest away and he now needed a new nest to rest at night. After the day was done, the crow perched on the television antenna and rested. He was feeling very thirsty. He began to look around him for a drink of water but he could not find any leaking tap or puddle. The sun was shining brightly and it made him thirstier.

Suddenly, he noticed a pitcher in the distance. The crow flew towards it in the hope of finding some water in it. And it was the crow's lucky day. There was water in the pitcher. But no matter how much the crow stretched inside the pitcher, he could not reach the water. He kept trying for some time.

Finally he gave up and began to think. Bits of rubble lay in a heap nearby. The crow had an idea. He swooped down on the heap and picked up a piece of rubble in his beak.

Then he flew back to the pitcher and dropped the piece in it. He continued this for a long time and slowly the water began to rise. When the water had reached the brim, The crow dipped his beak in it and drank to his fill. He was very satisfied and happy with himself.

Moral: *If there is a will, there is a way.*



The Magical Swan

Once upon a time in a village, there lived a farmer. He had a small piece of land which was hardly capable of growing anything. Therefore the farmer could earn very little from his land.

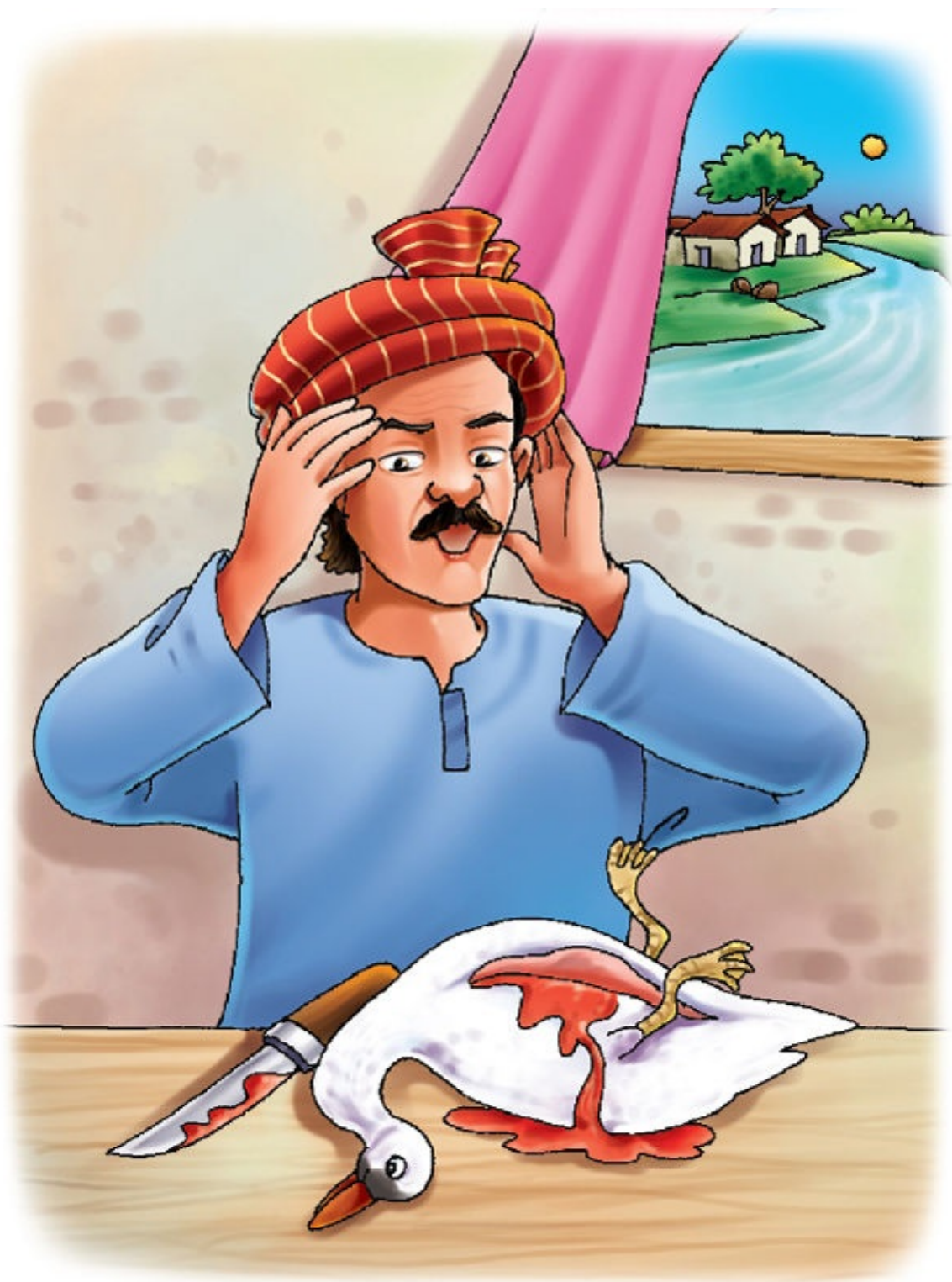
However, the farmer had a swan. It was a very beautiful swan and it was precious to the farmer. Because, every day at dawn the swan would lay one golden egg. The farmer would then take the golden egg to the jeweler and earn some money. It was enough for him to be able to live comfortably.

But the farmer was greedy. “This swan lays only one egg every day. At this rate I shall never be able to become rich,” he thought. “What if I kill the swan and take out all the golden eggs from its stomach. That way I will become rich overnight.”

He began to dream about a big house and servants attending on him. He dreamt all night. In the morning, he took his sickle and went to the swan. He grabbed the bird by the neck and slit its throat. When the swan was dead he cut open its stomach and he could not believe his own eyes.

There was no egg inside the swan’s stomach. Not a single egg! The farmer cried bitter tears. In his greed he had ended his only

Moral: Greedy people would always get what they deserve.



The Lion that ate Crops

Once, in a village lived a hardworking washer man with his family. The washer man had a donkey. Every morning the washer man would load his donkey with dirty laundry and set for the river. He worked day and night but could not provide proper meals for his family as it was a very small village and he had only few customers.

Once there was nothing for the donkey to feed. The washer man was worried that if the animal died of hunger he would not be able to carry the bundles of clothes to his customers. There was a small patch of grass outside the village but it was not enough to feed all the animals of the village.

So the washer man thought of a plan. He had once got a lion's skin as a gift from one of his friends. He thought, "If I put the lion's skin on the donkey and set him in the fields, people will think he is a lion and would run away."

He decided to put his idea to use and it worked. When the people working in the fields saw the donkey in the lion's skin, they thought it was a lion and ran away from the field. The donkey chewed on the crops peacefully and was happy.



Slowly the donkey started to become nice and fat. The washer man was very happy that his trick worked. Without having to spend money to feed his donkey, he had a nice fat donkey at his service.

The villagers however were very troubled. They did not know what to do about the crop eating lion. “We have to find a way to stop this lion from eating our

crops,” said one villager. “The only way to stop the lion is to kill it,” said another. “Yes, kill it!” echoed all other villagers. They had gathered sickles and ploughs, sticks and nets and were waiting in the fields when the washer man brought his donkey to graze there.

Suddenly the villagers started running towards them shouting, “Kill it! Kill it!” When the donkey heard all the noise, it got frightened. It started to bray loudly, “Hee Haw Hee Haw.”

Hearing it bray, the villagers stopped. They realized it was not a lion but a donkey in disguise. “Washer man, you tried to cheat us!” they exclaimed at the washer man, surprised. The washer man hung his head in shame and stood silently. The villagers were now angrier than they were. They beat the donkey so much that it died.

Moral: Cheating other people never helps.

The Fox's Invitation

Once upon a time in a jungle there lived a crow and a deer. They were very good friends. They shared their secrets with each other. During times of need, they helped each other. The crow would bring news of green grass to the deer and the deer would often carry twigs and dry sticks to help the crow build his nest. Together they lived very happily in the jungle.

In that jungle there lived a cunning fox too. The fox could not stand the deer and the crow's friendship. He wanted the deer to be killed somehow so that he could have the remains. He would often plot against the deer. But the crow was clever. He would always warn the deer beforehand and the fox's plan would fail.

Day and night the fox would plan to be friends with the deer. One day as the deer was grazing the fox came to him. "Hello friend," he said. "How are you doing today?" The deer did not like talking to strangers. He kept on grazing without paying the fox any attention. The fox did not lose hope. He continued, "Your antlers are the most beautiful antlers I have ever seen and your coat is so charming!"

The nice words made the deer finally give in to the fox. "Thank you," he said, feeling shy. The fox went on, "I know a very nice place where you can eat golden grains of barley instead of chewing on these dry grass. Come with me and I will show you."



The deer was tempted. He wanted to go with the fox but he knew that the crow would not be very happy about it. He told the crow of his meeting with the fox. The crow was upset. He warned the deer of the danger. "Friend, I do not trust that fox. He is definitely up to something evil. Do not listen to him and go with

him anywhere.”

Next day the fox met the deer again and invited him to the fields of barley. The deer refused to go with him as he was advised by his friend. However, the fox kept pestering the deer until one day he agreed.

The fox took the deer to a large field of barley. The deer was overjoyed. He wished he could have brought the crow along with him. But he had to come with the fox without telling the crow as he knew the crow would be upset. He began to eat the barley.

The deer got so lost in eating that he totally forgot there were men working in that field. The men saw the deer and they chased him. Finally they caught the deer by the help of a large net. The fox was overjoyed. His plan had finally worked. He hid in some bushes nearby and stood waiting for the men to kill the deer.

Meanwhile the crow began to look for his friend. He was flying over the field when he saw the poor deer lying trapped in the net. When the men were not looking, the crow flew down to the deer. “I am so sorry friend,” the deer wept, “I should have listened to you. Now look, I am in trouble.”

The crow was kind. He said, “Don’t worry. I will help you out of this. Just do as I say.” He then whispered something in the deer’s ear and flew away to the nearest tree. The fox wondered, “What is this clever crow up to. What did he whisper to the deer?”

Suddenly the men arrived. They were bringing an axe with them to kill the deer. The deer closed his eyes and lay quietly. “It’s dead!” One of the men exclaimed. “Let’s get it out of the net,” another man said. They began cutting the deer out of the net.

When the deer was out of the net, the crow began to caw loudly. The deer took the signal and it ran with all its might. The men chased him again but they could not catch him. One of them threw the axe at the deer but it missed the deer. The axe hit the fox instead who was hiding in the bushes and he died.

Moral: Never trust a stranger and accept his invitation.



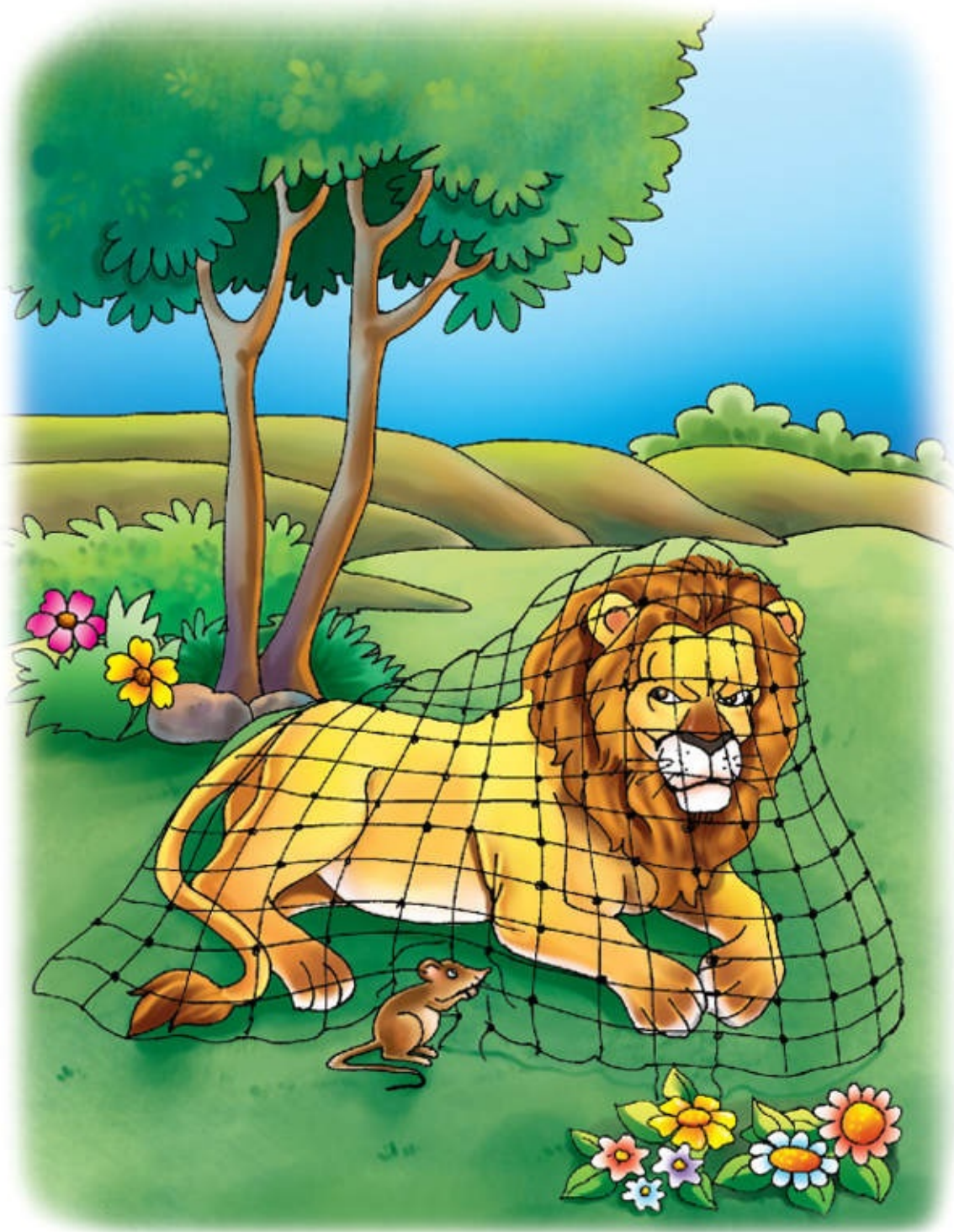
The Lion And The Mouse

Once, in a mighty jungle lived a lion. He spent his days in peace in a large den. In that same den lived a small mouse. There were many trees around the den and the mouse happily lived on the nuts from those trees.

One day when the mouse was running around collecting nuts for dinner, by mistake he went inside the lion's nostril. The lion was fast asleep. Feeling the mouse inside his nose, the lion sneezed loudly. The sneeze was so loud that it echoed through the forest. The mouse had instantly come out of the nostril because of the sneeze and the quick lion caught it between his paws. "So you are the one who has dared to disturb me?" The lion roared. "I will squeeze you to death."

The mouse trembled with fear. "Good lion, please do not kill me. Someday I might be of use to you," he said. Hearing this, the lion laughed, "You are a little mouse. Of what use would you be to me?"

The lion was still laughing when he loosened his grip and let the mouse go. The mouse bowed gratefully and hurried back into its hole.



One day, the lion was chasing a calf. He did not realize that some hunters had put the calf there to catch the lion. The lion got tangled in a net that the hunters had spread. He could not free himself. Angry and sad, the lion roared loudly.

The mouse who was gathering nuts in the den heard the roar and ran to help the lion. When he reached where the lion was, he felt sorry for his friend. The mouse began to bite the net. With his sharp teeth he was able to cut through the net and the lion sprang out from it.

The lion was grateful to the mouse for saving his life and they became best friends forever.

Moral: Be kind to everyone. You never know who might come to help you.



United We Stand

Long ago, in a certain village lived a hardworking farmer. He had a small piece of land and he worked on it day and night to make a living. His only sorrow was his five sons. His sons were very lazy. Instead of helping their father they spent their days idling and quarreling amongst themselves.

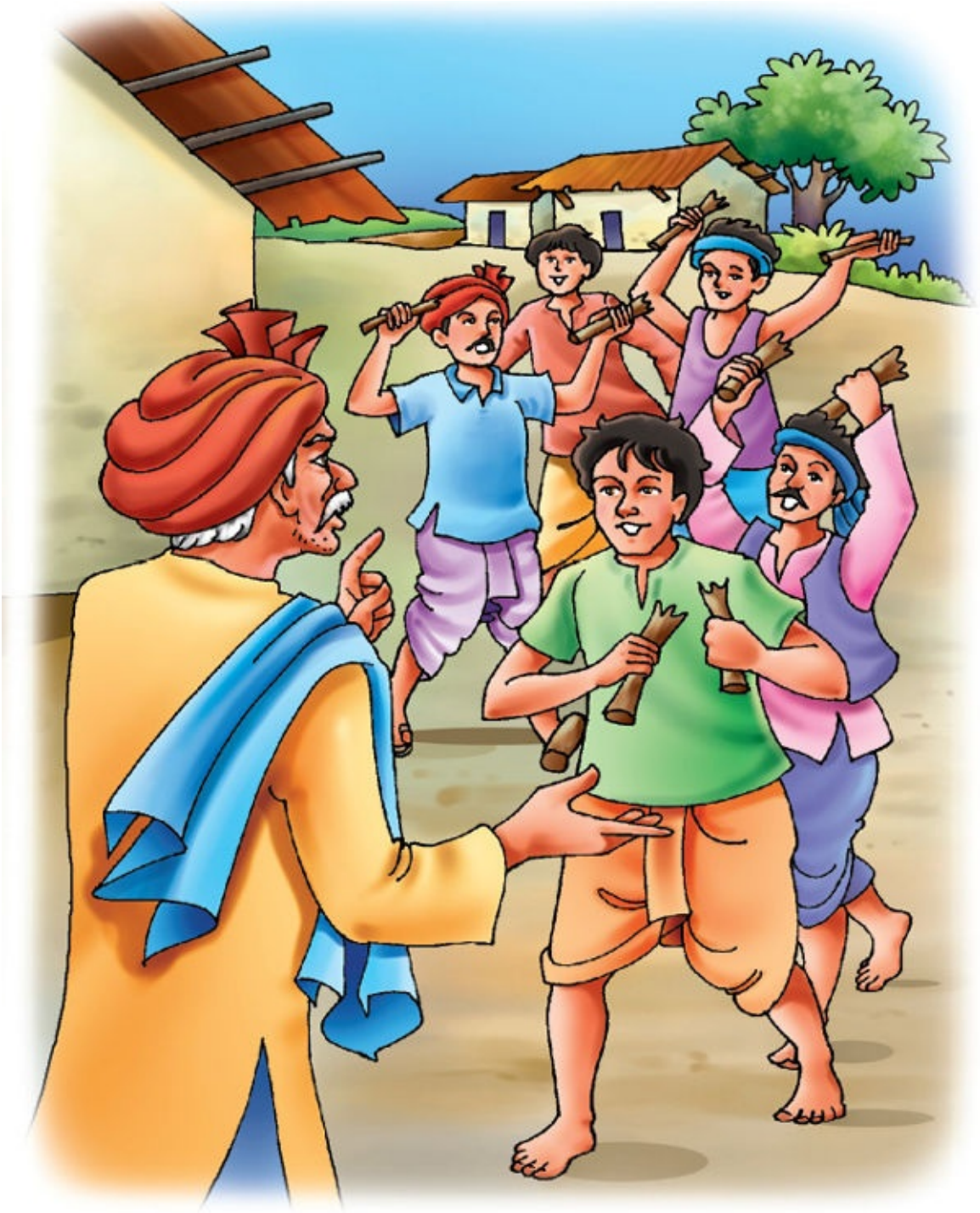
When the farmer grew old, he began to worry. “My sons keep fighting amongst themselves. When I am dead, they will divide the tiny bit of land I have. Then it will not be sufficient for any one of them. Also, people might want to take advantage of their quarrels. I must do something to teach them a lesson,” he thought.

The clever farmer gathered some sticks. He tied the sticks into a bundle and called his sons. He then handed the bundle to them and asked them to take turns and try to break the bundle. They tried their best but even the strongest of the brothers could not snap the bundle. One of them suggested, “Father, untie the bundle and give it to us. It will be much easier to break the bundle that way.”

“Exactly!” said their father. “If each of you chooses to live by yourself, other people will try to take advantage of you. But if you choose to stay together, then no one can harm you.”

The brothers understood their father’s advice. They decided to stop quarreling and start living together in harmony.

Moral: United we stand. Divided we fall.



Dharmbuddhi and Papbuddhi

Many years ago there lived two friends Dharmbuddhi and Papbuddhi. Dharmbuddhi was wise and believed that success comes only through hard work. Papbuddhi was always on the look out to cheat people of their money.

One day they decided to go to the city of Ujjain. They set off from home together. They had earned a lot of money and after five years, they decided to come back home.

When they reached near their city, Papbuddhi said, "I do not want to carry so much money and keep it in my home. It will attract thieves. I think I will just dig a hole under a tree and leave the money here." Dharmbuddhi too liked the idea.

They dug a hole below a large tree. There, they hid their wealth and went home. When night fell, Papbuddhi returned to the tree, dug up the money and took it home with him.

In few days, Dharmbuddhi needed to make some payments. He along with Papbuddhi went to the tree to find the money. When they had dug the ground below it, Dharmbuddhi was surprised to find it empty. All the money was gone. They both began to accuse each other.



Finally, it was decided that the village elders will be made to judge who the culprit was. The village elders believed in the tree god. After hearing Pappabuddhi and Dharmabuddhi's story, they decided to ask the tree god about the thief.

They came to the tree. The village elders closed their eyes and prayed to the tree god, “O’ great tree god, please tell us, who has stolen the money that these gentlemen had hidden below you?”

Suddenly there was a sound. The tree answered “Dharmbuddhi.”

They were amazed. Papbuddhi demanded that Dharmbuddhi be punished. “Please give me a moment,” said Dharmbuddhi. He collected some dry branches and leaves and lit a fire under the tree.

To their shock, Papbuddhi’s father came out coughing. He was hiding under the roots of the tree when the smoke began to burn his eyes and lungs.

Papbuddhi’s father confessed that it was his son’s idea to rob Dharmbuddhi of his wealth. He had hidden under the roots so that he could imitate the tree god and put all the blame on Dharmbuddhi.

Dharmbuddhi got back his wealth while Papbuddhi and his father were sent to jail.

Moral: Crime never goes unpunished.

The Monkey and The Crocodile

There lived a monkey on a big mango tree that stood by the bank of a river. A bountiful crop of mangoes would grow on the tree and the monkey lived in peace while he feasted on the sweet juicy fruits.

In the river lived a very cunning crocodile. Even though the river was full of fishes, the crocodile longed to eat the monkey. Every day, when he would lie soaking the sun he would look at the monkey playing on the tree and think, “I wish I could eat his heart. He feasts on the sweet mangoes all day. I wonder how sweet his heart must have become because of it.”

The wicked crocodile’s wish to eat the monkey grew with each passing day. Finally he came up with a plan.

One summer afternoon as the monkey was resting the crocodile swam to the bank and crawled to the foot of the mango tree. “Hello friend,” he said, “Aren’t you tired of eating only mangoes?” The monkey was puzzled. He said, “You have any better idea?”

“As a matter of fact, I do,” said the crocodile. “Come with me, across the river and I will show you a garden full of banana trees. I cannot describe it to you in words how ripe and sweet the fruits are.”



The monkey agreed to go with the crocodile, but he pointed out, “I can’t swim. How will I be able to go with you across the river?”

The crocodile was waiting for this opportunity. “Why fear when I am here?” he

said. "I will carry you on my back and swim across the river to the garden."

Seeing that this was a good chance of tasting something different from mangoes, the monkey agreed. He climbed on the crocodile's back and set off for the imaginary garden.

The crocodile slid into the river. He started swimming with the monkey on his back. When they had reached the middle of the river the crocodile suddenly began to sink. "Stop! Stop! What do you think you are doing? I will drown if you sink into the river!" the frightened monkey exclaimed.

The wicked crocodile said, "That is exactly the plan dear friend. I will let you drown in the river. And when you are dead, I will rip you open and eat your heart. All these years, you have been feeding on the sweet mangoes. I wonder how sweet your heart must have become by now. I have dreamt about this day for a long time. Now there is no stopping me."



The monkey realized he had fallen into the crocodile's evil trap. But he decided to remain calm. He said, "You should have told me this before. You are my friend. Had you told me that you wanted to eat my heart I would have gladly offered it to you. You will be disappointed if you kill me now for my heart is not

in my body but on the tree.”

It was the crocodile’s turn to be puzzled now. He asked, “So you monkeys do not keep your hearts in your bodies? I should have known this!”

The monkey said, “Do not worry dear friend. Take me back to the tree and I will bring my heart to you from the branches where it is hanging right now.”

The crocodile decided to take the monkey back. What good was the monkey to him if his heart was on the tree? He turned around and swam to the tree.

When they reached the river bank, the monkey quickly got down from the crocodile’s back and climbed up on the tree. From the highest branch it shouted at the crocodile, “You fool, you thought you could trick me so easily and eat my heart? Now you are the one who has been tricked. My heart beats in my body. I thought you were my friend so I believed you. But you are no friend. Go away.”

The crocodile was speechless. He had got the taste of his own medicine. Sadly he turned around and went back in the river.

Moral: *Never trust a wicked fellow.*

The Woodcutter and his Foolish Son

In a small village near the dense forest lived a woodcutter with his wife and son. The woodcutter was a very hard working fellow. Every day at dawn, he would leave his house to chop wood in the forest and not return until it was dark.

His son was slow-witted. The woodcutter realized that he was too foolish to be able to learn any other trade. So he took his son with him every day to teach him how to chop wood.

One day, the woodcutter's wife asked the son to carry some rice and curry to his father in the woods. When the son reached, it was time for lunch and the woodcutter was hungry. They sat down in the shade of a tree and ate the rice and curry. Then the woodcutter asked his son to chop some wood to carry home. The son picked up the spare axe and got down to work.

They were working when suddenly a wasp flew from the bushes nearby and began distracting them. The woodcutter waved his hands in irritation. Then he waved the towel that hung around his shoulders. But the wasp did not leave. It kept on buzzing around them.



The woodcutter said to his son, “Can you kill this wasp? It is bothering me.” The son who was chopping a large branch waved his hands at the wasp. He then waved a leafy stick at it. But the wasp continued buzzing.

It flew and sat on the woodcutter’s shoulder. The son had an idea. With a large

block of wood, he hit the woodcutter's shoulder. His father howled in pain. The wasp was killed but the woodcutter was hurt very badly. It was a long time before he was well again.

Moral: *Never trust a fool.*



The Ant and The Pigeon

Once upon a time, beside a mighty river stood a large, leafy Mango tree. Many pigeons made their nests in that Mango tree. They lived there happily as the tree would give them sweet fruits to eat.

During the summer, the tree would be drooping with mangoes. The pigeons would then have a feast every day.

Under that same tree there was a large ant hill. Thousands of ants lived in that ant hill. During the summers, they too would feast on the fallen mangoes. Life could not get better for them.

One day, a pigeon was looking out at the river from its nest in the tree. Suddenly it noticed that an ant had fallen into the river and was drowning. The ant was trying its best to swim and reach the bank but the current was too strong for it. But the brave ant kept on fighting for its life.



The pigeon was moved. It took pity on the tiny ant. With its beak, it tore a leaf from the nearest branch and flew to the river. Then it threw the leaf into the river. The ant hurried and climbed on the leaf that was now floating. The leaf

drifted ashore with the current and the ant was saved.

The ant could never forget what the pigeon had done for him that day. He began to look for an opportunity to return the favor. And the day soon arrived.

A hunter had found out that many pigeons lived in the mango tree. The ant was carrying some food back to the ant hill when it saw the hunter aiming at the tree with his bow and arrow. The ant was frightened. It turned towards the tree and saw that the hunter was aiming at the pigeon which had saved his life. It was his turn now.

Quietly he climbed up the hunter's leg and walked through his body to his head. As the hunter was about to let go of the arrow, it stung the hunter in the corner of his eye. The sting was sharp and it distracted the hunter. The hunter groaned with pain. His groan was so loud that it echoed through the fields and made the pigeons in the mango tree fly away as they sensed the danger.

The pigeon was saved. Though it never found out how the ant had saved its life, but the ant felt very happy for the pigeon.

Moral: *If you do good deeds, good things will happen to you.*



The Monkeys and The Hat Seller

Once upon a time, there was a man who sold hats to make a living. He would carry colorful hats in a large bundle and would walk from town to town, selling them. The children loved him for he was amusing as he himself wore a colorful hat on his head. Over time he had gained many customers for his hats.

One day as he was walking from one town to another, he spotted a large banyan tree. The hat seller was tired. It was noon and he had been walking all day, selling hats. He decided to rest under the banyan tree.

He set the bundle at the foot of the banyan tree and lay down for a nap. Suddenly he was woken by a loud chatter. On that banyan tree lived a troop of monkeys. When the monkeys saw the bundle, they were curious to know what was inside it. The mischievous monkeys had each taken a hat from the bundle and were now wearing them on their heads.

The hat seller was puzzled to find all his hats gone. When he looked around, he saw that the monkeys were wearing them. He was in deep trouble. He thought, "Stupid monkeys. What do I do now? I can chase them with a stick. But that won't bring the hats back to me."



He stood there and scratched his head. Suddenly he noticed that the monkeys were scratching their heads too.

He pulled a face at the monkeys. The monkeys too pulled faces at him. He then slammed his forehead. All the monkeys slammed their foreheads. He realized

what was happening.

The smart hat seller then took off his hat and threw it on the ground. The monkeys followed him and threw their hats on the ground too. He was waiting for this. He quickly collected the hats and put them back in his bundle.

The monkeys looked on as the hat seller walked away from the tree, humming to himself.

Moral: Be wise and you will find your way.



The Blue Jackal

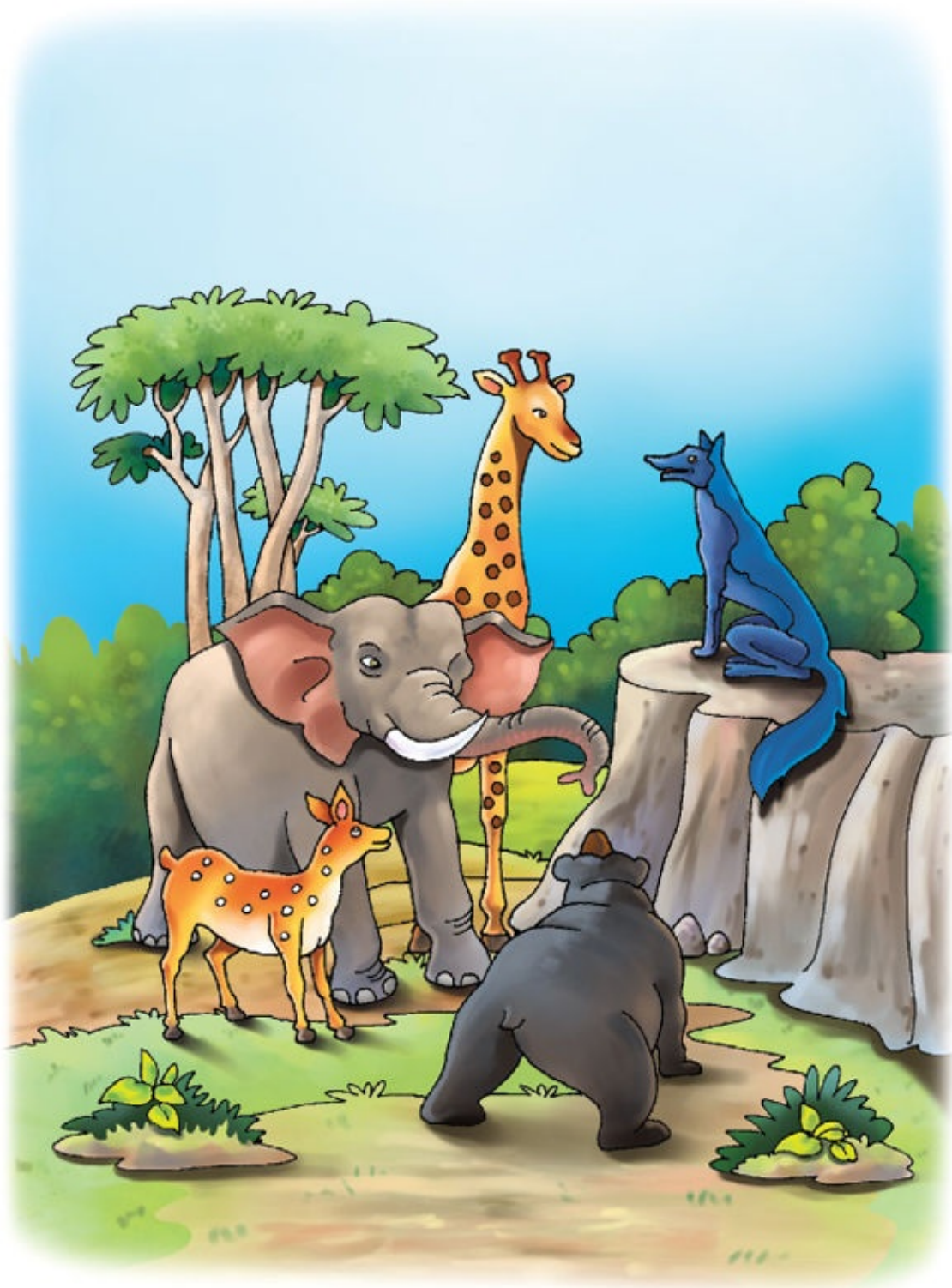
In a forest near a village lived a jackal. Although he was a timid fellow, he was also very greedy. One day the jackal went into the village to steal some hens. When he entered a coop, the hens began to make a lot of noise. Hearing the noise some people came out with axes in their hands and their dogs by their side and began chasing the jackal.

The jackal was in a fix. The forest was far and he knew he would not be able to outrun the men and their dogs.

He saw an empty drum behind one of the shops. The jackal quickly climbed onto the drum and hid inside it until the trouble passed. When the neighborhood was quiet again, the jackal crept out of the drum and walked into the forest.

All that running had made him thirsty. The jackal walked to a river for a drink of water. Suddenly he noticed that he no longer looked the way he used to. He had turned blue all over.

The drum that he was hiding in had belonged to a dye shop. The owner had stored blue dye in it. When the jackal hid in the drum his coat got blue dye on it. The jackal was amazed at his new look. An idea struck him. "What if I am able to fool all these stupid animals of the forest? I would never have to risk my neck to steal a hen again."



He proudly strutted into the forest and called a meeting. He declared, “Listen everyone. As you must have guessed it already by now, I am the only one of my kind. I was sent by God to rule over all other animals. From today, you will

respect me, care for me and bring me food if you fear for the safety of the forest and your lives.”

All the animals were scared. They bowed to the blue jackal in respect. Life for the jackal improved. He would sit under a large tree and eat and roll in the dirt all day. The other animals would bring him food and care for his needs. He began to grow fat.

But some of the jackals were not convinced that he was sent by God. They suspected him to be a jackal like themselves. So they held a meeting among themselves and decided, “Tonight at midnight when the whole forest would be sleeping, we would join our voices together and howl. Let’s see if our king howls with us, for if he does, we will know he is nothing but a jackal who is trying to fool us.”

So at midnight the jackals joined their voices and howled loudly. The blue jackal who was fast asleep, woke up with the sound. And because he was indeed a jackal he could not help but howl at the top of his voice on hearing the others.

Moral: One must never lie.

The Clever Fox

Once upon a time, the crow was circling a garbage dump. Suddenly he spotted a big juicy bone. The crow was overjoyed. He had been feeding on dry orange peels for a long time. “What a treat!” he thought. “I must grab it before anybody else sees it.”

Thinking thus he picked the bone in his beak and flew to perch on a roof. Suddenly a fox approached him. The fox too had been looking for something to eat. It noticed the juicy bone in the crow’s beak. The cunning fox had a plan to get the bone.

It went to the roof where the crow was sitting and said, “Hello there friend, perhaps you do not know me but I happen to be a friend of your friend, the kite. He told me, what a lovely voice you have. He told me that you had sung a fabulous song, on his birthday. Today is my birthday. Will you sing me a song too?”

The crow thought, “Wow! He is praising me. I must oblige this good fox and sing him a song.” And the crow cocked his head and flapped his wings and sang loudly. Just as he had done that, the bone fell from his beak and landed straight in front of the fox. The fox was waiting. He picked up the bone and ran towards the forest.

Moral: Never believe the one who flatters you.



The Happy Monk

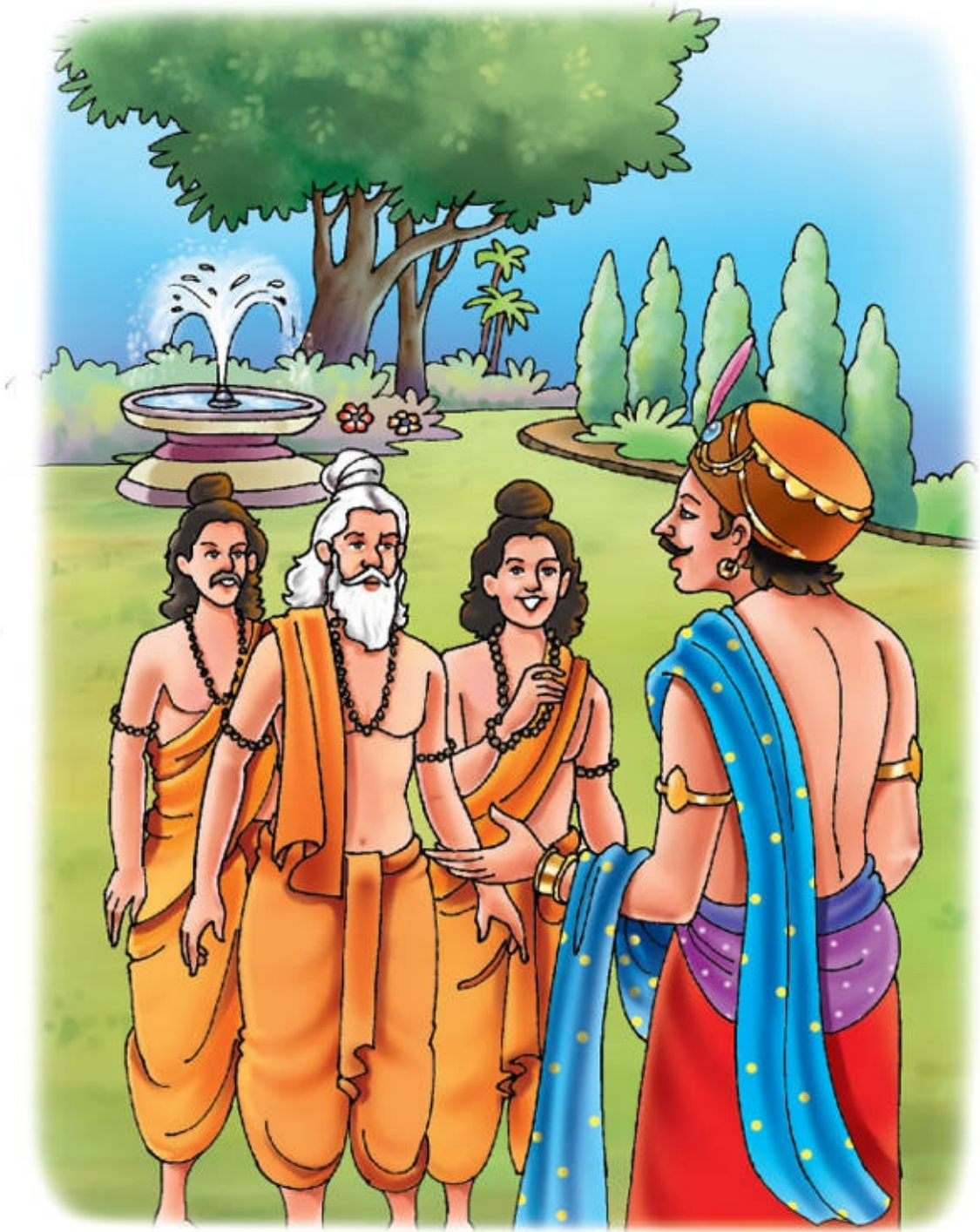
Long ago, there lived a very rich man. As he became older he realized that both the rich and the poor suffered equally when they were old. Enlightened, he left behind his luxurious life and traveled to the forest where he would meditate.

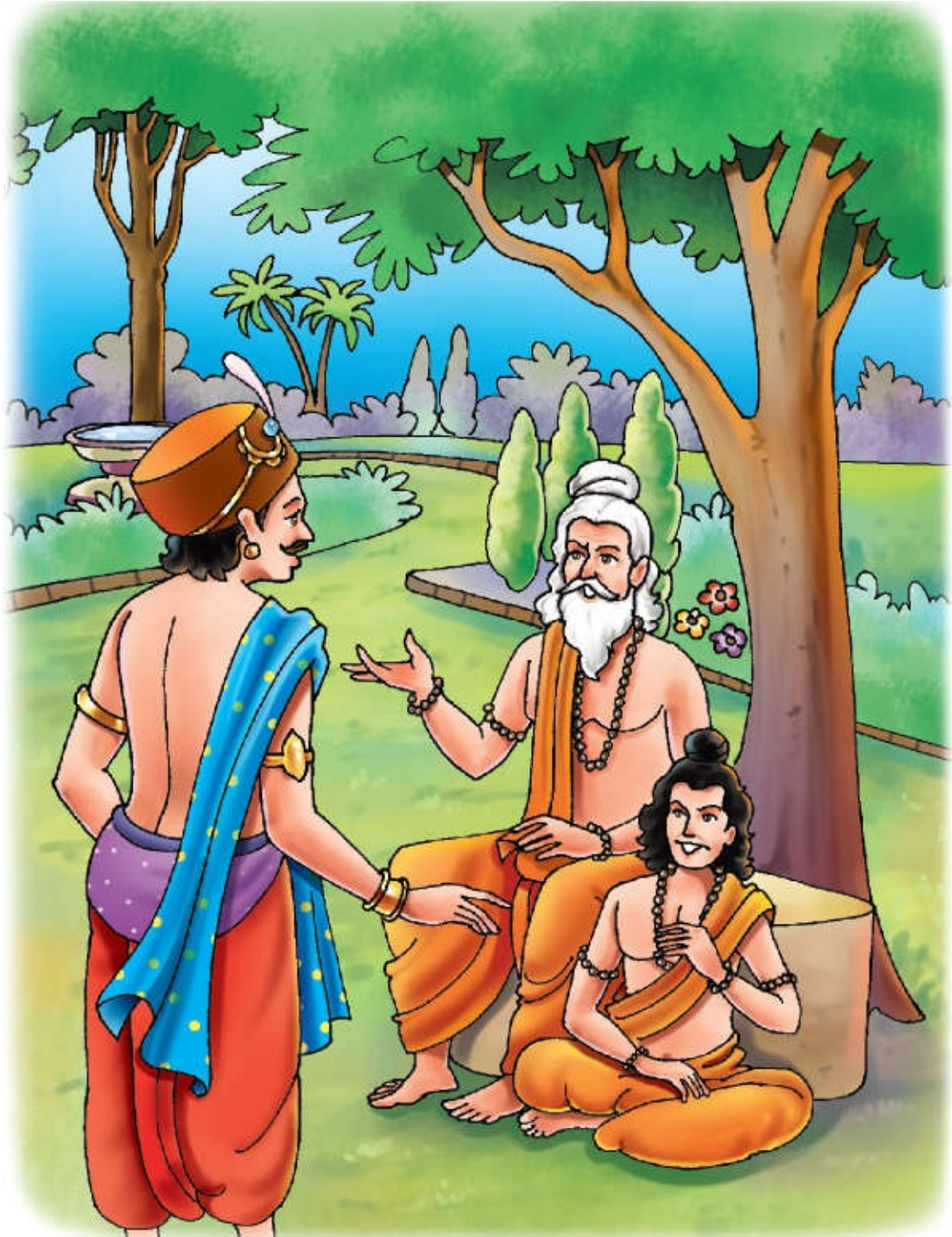
Because the old monk was so friendly and wise, he gained over five hundred followers who began living with him in the forest.

Though monks were meant to look serious, one of them would always wear a slight smile on his face. Everybody would ask him about what made him so happy but he say, “If I told you, you wouldn’t believe me. And if you thought I spoke a lie, it would dishonor my master.” But the wise old master knew that the smile would never be wiped from the monk’s face. Thus the happy monk was his number one assistant.

One spring, the monks decided to go to the city. The king welcomed the monks.

This great king took his responsibilities as a ruler very seriously. But he was always worried. Sometimes his wives fought for his attention and his sons fought amongst themselves for the throne. Sometimes, a dissatisfied subject would threaten his life and he was constantly worried about the finances of his kingdom. He never had the time to be happy.





When it was time for the monks to go back to the forest, the king approached the master and said, “If your disciples wish to go back, they are most welcome. But you are old and weak. What will you go back to the forest for? Please remain in the garden of pleasure and allow us the opportunity to serve you.” But the monks

didn't agree and the master called the happy monk and asked him to lead the others into the forest as their new master.

The happy monk as asked by his master took the remaining disciples to the forest. There he gained more wisdom by meditating and his inner happiness increased by folds.

One day, he came back to meet his master. When the king came to pay a visit he was astonished at the smile on the happy monk's face. He asked the master, "Your reverence, how is it that he smiles so much? Does nothing in the world worry him?"

"You wouldn't believe if I told you," said the master. "He was once a king, same as you. Just as mighty, just as fair. But he realized that true happiness lies neither in power nor in wealth. True happiness lies in freedom from it. He left all that behind and since then, that smile has not left his face."

The happy monk got up to leave, as the king bowed to him with respect.

Moral: *Happiness seeks those who do not seek wealth or power.*

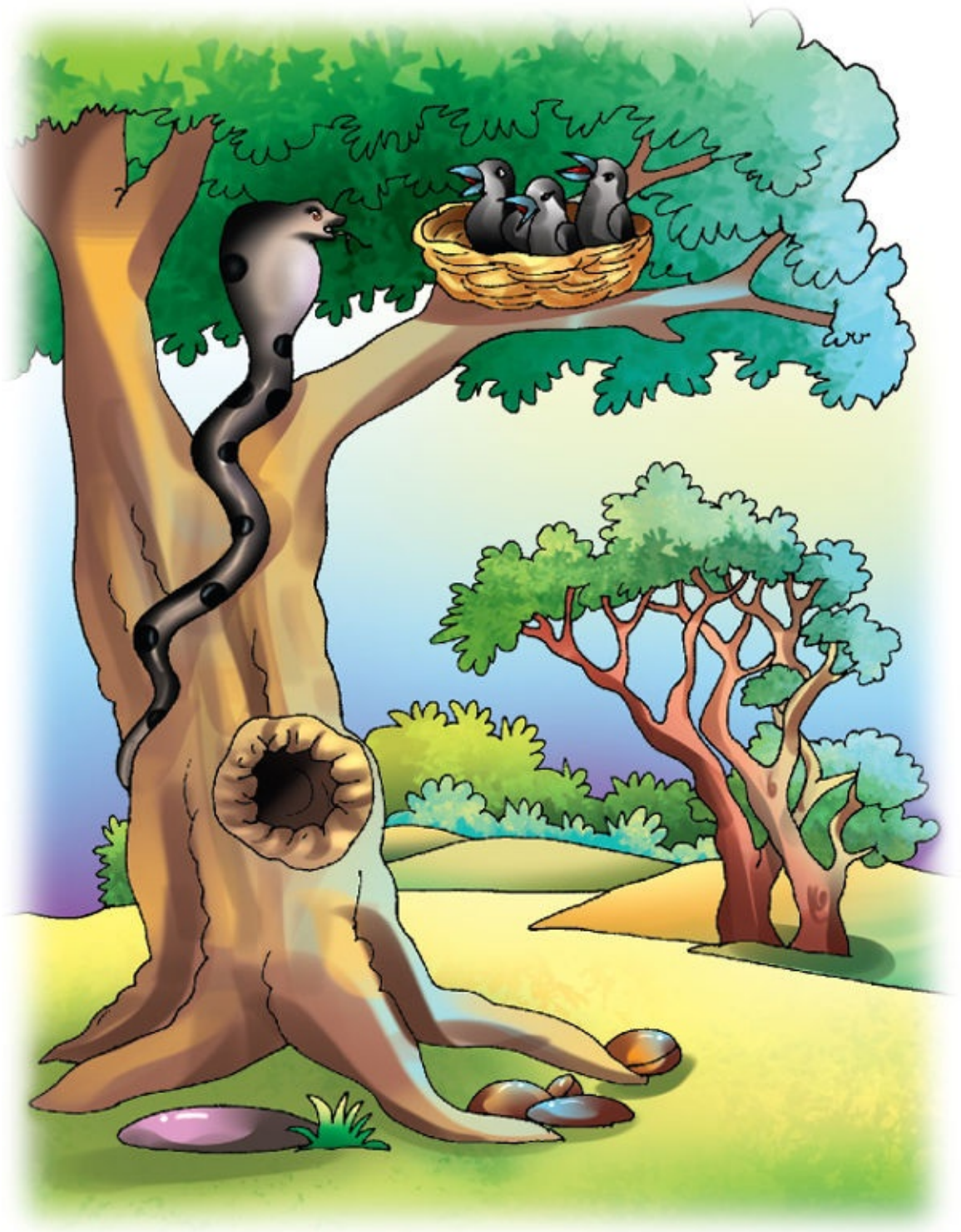
The Crows and The Cobra

Long ago in a kingdom, beside the royal ghats, stood a large tree. A father crow and a mother crow had built their nest in one of its branches. When it was spring, the mother crow laid some eggs which hatched into beautiful chicks with time. The father crow and the mother crow were very happy and proud of the chicks.

At the foot of that tree was a hole where lived a black cobra snake. The snake was very cunning. All through spring he would sit listening to the chicks in the nest and think of eating them up one day. And one day when both the father crow and the mother crow were away, the snake quietly climbed the tree and reached the nest. The chicks were waiting for their parents in the nest.

The snake thought, “It is my lucky day!” and he gobbled all the chicks one by one.

When the father crow and the mother crow returned they were shocked to find the cage empty. The mother crow began to cry, “O my poor children. What could have happened to you? Who could have visited our nest while we were away?” The father crow tried to calm her, “Don’t worry dear. Whoever has done it, his deed will not go unpunished.”



The next day the mother crow went to find food. But the father crow stayed back hidden behind the leaves. It was then he noticed the fat black cobra. The father crow instantly knew that it could only have been the cobra which had eaten his chicks. He knew he would not be able to fight the cobra as it was very poisonous

and dangerous.

He began to think of a plan. He saw that just then the prince had come to the ghat for a dip in the cool water. He had taken off his clothes and his gold chain and was now swimming in the water with pleasure.

An idea struck the crow. He swooped down and picked up the gold chain when the attendant was not looking and threw the chain down the snake's hole. When the prince started to dress again, he couldn't find the chain. Several men were called from the royal palace to look for the chain.

They looked in every bush and turned every stone. Finally they found something gleaming in a hole under the tree. When they went to pull the chain out of the hole they saw the snake resting in there. They soon killed the snake, took the chain and went back to the palace.

When the mother crow came back in the evening, the father crow told her, "We are safe now. The evil snake is dead."

Moral: *Intelligence is greater than physical power.*

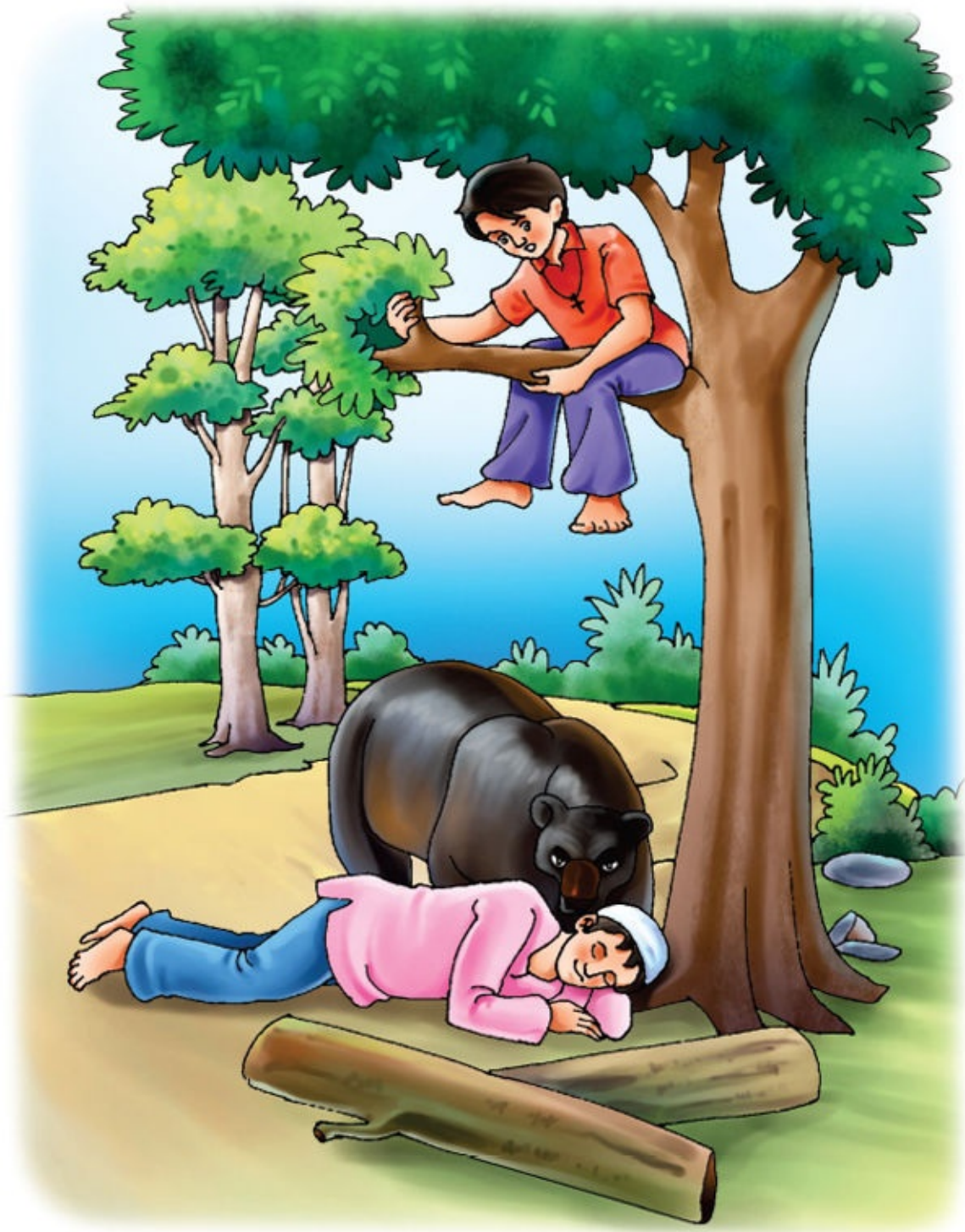
Two Friends and A Bear

Once upon a time there was a woodcutter. When he had enough money he decided to start a wood-yard in the front of his house. Every day the woodcutter would go to the forest with his son and together they would be chop wood and bring it to the wood-yard for selling.

They had many customers as wood was commonly used in the town to light a fire or build houses. Many people in the town would come to them to buy wood. Therefore, Ron, the wood cutter's son had made many friends.

But Ron's favorite friend was Hamid. Hamid would come to Ron's father's wood yard with a wheel barrow to buy wood so that his mother could light the stove. Hamid and Ron's friendship grew slowly and they began to spend more time together often visiting the woods and enjoying the tidbits of exchanges they made.

One day when they were walking in the woods, Ron and Hamid saw a big brown grizzly bear. They began to shiver with fright. Ron being a wood cutter's son knew how to climb a tree. When he saw the bear coming towards them he quickly climbed the nearest tree and sat hidden within its branches.



Poor Hamid did not know how to climb a tree. He continued to stand rooted to the spot and tremble with fear. Suddenly an idea struck him. He had read in the school that bears do not eat dead animals. He lay down straight on the ground and held his breath.

When the bear came near him, it thought Hamid was dead. He did pretend like he was. The bear smelled Hamid's face and ears and left without harming him.

When the bear was out of sight, Ron got down from the tree. He helped Hamid from the ground and asked, "What was the bear whispering in your ear?"

Hamid was surprised that his friend should ask him a stupid question as that. He smiled and said, "It said, the guy on the tree is not your friend." And Hamid walked away leaving Ron puzzled.

Moral: A friend is one who stands by you in times of trouble.



The Dog and The Bone

Once upon a time, in a village a butcher's shop stood by the roadside. Many stray dogs often wandered around the shop in the hope to find a piece of meat or a bone.

One morning a dog walked by the shop. The butcher was in a good mood that day. He was humming as he worked. When he saw the poor dog, he took pity. "This dog looks hungry and sad. This bone should cheer it up," he thought. "Hey fellow, here, here!" He hollered at the dog and threw him a large juicy bone.

The dog was amazed. He couldn't believe his luck. "My lucky stars! Today is the best day of my life," he thought as he woofed enthusiastically and caught the bone in its jaws.

The dog thought, I must bury the bone before the other dogs see it. And he decided to go to the fields on the other side of the canal and bury the bone in a safe place. As he climbed on the bridge, he saw another dog was walking in the canal with him.

The dog stood on the bridge and looked at this other dog in the water. "Wow! This dog too has a bone exactly like mine. If I can scare the dog away, I will have two bones to bury today," he thought. He became convinced, it indeed was a lucky day for him.



The dog snarled at the dog in the water. Then he broke into a threatening bark. No sooner had he done so, the bone slipped from his jaws and landed into the water. There was a loud splash and the other dog vanished.

The dog stood on the bridge unable to understand what just happened. He realized, he had lost the bone he had.

Moral: Always be content with what you have.



The liar Shepherd

Once upon a time, a farmer in a village had reared many sheep. But because he was often busy in the fields, he decided to let his young boy guard the sheep while they grazed in the meadow beside the forest.

The forest was notorious for tigers. So it was important that someone guarded the sheep while they grazed. The young boy was a lazy fellow. He hated to work. At first he liked the job because all he had to do was lie down under the large banyan tree all day while the sheep fed on the green grass around him.

But soon he got bored of it. He thought, “This is no fun, having to lie under the tree all day and look out for a tiger that was perhaps never coming. I should think of something fun to do.” So he thought of a mischief.

One afternoon, when the farmers were busy in the fields, he suddenly started shouting at the top of his voice, “Tiger! Tiger! Help!”

The farmers thinking that a tiger had indeed attacked the kid ran towards the meadow with clubs, spades, and sickle simply anything that he could find.



When they reached the meadow, the young boy was rolling with laughter. The farmers were very irritated. Though they were relieved to not find a tiger they were angry that the boy had scared them. They scolded him and left.

The boy was glad that his trick worked. He repeated the mischief again the next day. Again, the farmers came running to his help, thinking the tiger had attacked his sheep and they were irritated to find that the boy was only trying to fool them.

Then on the third day, the tiger appeared. No matter how loud the boy screamed no one came for his help because they thought he was only playing a prank again.

The boy was helpless as the tiger ate all his sheep, one by one.

Moral: No one believes a liar.



The Farmer and The Snake

One cold winter morning, a farmer was walking to his fields. The winter that year was terrible and it had rained the previous day. As the farmer walked to his fields he suddenly noticed a baby snake lying in his way. The snake was half dead from the cold and the farmer instantly knew that if he didn't help the snake then it was sure to die.

With a lot of care he brought the snake home and placed it before the fire. When the snake could move again, he brought some warm milk and fed it. From that day on the snake became a member of his family. It lived in his house and he fed it milk and paste of ripe bananas every day.

His family members knew that the snake would not bite anyone for it lived and fed with them. But the snake had learnt the ways of the world. Over the years, it grew stronger and vicious like a real snake.

One day when the farmer's baby boy slept in his cradle the snake crept up to him. The snake climbed the cradle and just as it was about to sink its teeth in the child's leg, the farmer's wife saw it. "Oh My God!" she shrieked loudly and fainted. The farmer came running and he too spotted the snake.

The farmer was quick to act. He took his sickle and cut the snake into two, just as it was about to strike.

Moral: Never help a dangerous person.



Grapes are Sour

Once upon a time there was a fox. He lived in a large forest which stood by a little village. One day the fox roamed all through the forest in search of food. But it was perhaps an unlucky day for him. After roaming in the forest for the whole day, he was still hungry.

The fox was beginning to get weak and tired because of hunger. He was losing his patience.

After a lot of searching, he came upon a vineyard. The farmer and his son were away. The fox noticed that very ripe and juicy grapes hung from the wooden frames. He licked his chops.

“I wish I could grab just one bunch. I would eat to my heart’s content,” the fox thought.

So he jumped at a bunch of grapes. But to his misfortune, he couldn’t get hold of the bunch. He jumped again, but to no luck.

The fox jumped several times at the bunch of grapes. He tried all possible ways he could stretch and twist his body while jumping. But it was all in vain. The grapes still hung on the tree. They looked like they were teasing him.

The fox thought to himself, “Perhaps they are sour. They must be.” And he turned around and went back to the forest.

Moral: People generally hate what they can’t get.



The Two Frogs

Once, two frogs hopped in the backyard of a sweet shop. The owner of the sweet shop used this place to make sweets. Large containers full of sugar and butter were kept there. There was also a large cauldron full of milk. The place was not very clean, so mosquitoes were buzzing around it. The frogs ate the mosquitoes till they were quite content. Then they decided to explore the place.

The frogs found the cauldron full of milk. Both of them began to wonder what kind of a pool it was. “Let’s jump in and see,” said one frog to the other. The other agreed. They jumped in the milk and found that it was different from an ordinary pool. Swimming in it needed more effort.

One frog said, “I am so tired. I want to get out of here.” But he couldn’t climb the walls of the cauldron because it was too high and too slippery. After several attempts he gave up and stopped swimming. Soon he drowned to the bottom of the cauldron.

The other frog saw this, and he continued swimming. He too was tired but he did not lose hope. As he swam with all his might the milk began to churn. Soon lumps of butter were formed and they began to float in the milk and the frog climbed on those lumps, jumped across the walls and out of the cauldron.

Moral: Determination and patience helps one to overcome all obstacles.



The Frog and The Rat

Once upon a time in a small pond lived a frog. He was very lonely. The fish and the crab which lived in the pond were not very friendly with it. Thus the frog had no friends. He would often look at the sky and wish upon a falling star, for a friend.

One day a rat saw the frog. It lived in a burrow near the pond. It was a cheerful fellow, so when they met the rat said, "Hello there friend. How are you today?"

The frog rolled his eyes towards the heavens and said, "I am so lonely. It makes me so sad."

"Oh come on now, I am your friend. You can come into my burrow whenever you want to have a good time," the rat offered. The frog was much pleased. From that day on, they were best of friends. They would spend hours gossiping at the side of the pond.

Then on a fine morning the frog had an idea. "Let's tie the ends of a string to each of our legs. That way when I miss you, I can tug at the string and you would know." The rat agreed.


They found a string and tied its ends on their legs. But an eagle which was hovering in the sky saw this. It swooped down to catch the rat. This scared the frog and he dashed towards the pond for dear life. But in his hurry he forgot that the string was still attached his friend to his leg. The rat was dragged to the pond and was drowned.



After few days the rat's dead body floated back on the surface of the water. The eagle was still hovering in the sky. It swooped down again and grabbed the rat from the water. The Frog went along because it was tied to the other end of the string.

Moral: Don't be friends with a fool.





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₹ 150
\$ 2.95
£ 1.95



Cover
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